

**A Report on the 22nd International Association of Teachers
of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL)
Conference, 11–14 April, 1988**

Naraporn Chan-O-Cha
Suchada Nimmannit
Chulalongkorn University Language Institute

The 22nd IATEFL International Conference held in Edinburgh this year was probably one of the biggest venues in which educators and teachers of English from all over the world met to share ideas and experiences. There were more than one thousand participants. Three plenary sessions, five panel discussions, one demonstration, 51 workshops and 238 talks were organized during these four days. Since the conference had no specific themes, participants had a wide variety of topics to choose from. To facilitate this decision-making procedure, some of the sessions were organized under eight special interest group programmes: there were six Business English, six Testing, eleven Teacher Development, ten Phonology, one Learner Development, six Video, five Young Learners and nineteen Computer Assisted Language Learning sessions.

The first three days started with three well-known ELT personalities: Alan Davies, Jo Ann Crandall and Arthur Van Essen, who gave talks in the plenary sessions. Alan Davies and Arthur Van Essen concentrated on ELT in the UK and on the Continent. Jo Ann Crandall discussed content in language teaching.

Since staff development has been one of the most current issues in Thailand, we chose to attend the Teacher Development sessions. Peter Maingay, John Norrish, and Edward Wood outlined characteristics of potential trainers, namely, good personal relations, good knowledge of methodology, as well as experience in material or test preparation, and problem-solving abilities. Paul Davis and Katie Plumb's talk on "Teacher Development for Teachers, not Trainers," like our presentation at the conference,¹ emphasized that in effective teacher development programs participants share equal roles and responsibilities in selecting the topics, planning the activities and participating in the teaching or discussions. Mike Wallace, in his talk entitled, "The Reflective Model," stressed the importance of teachers' awareness of the strengths or weaknesses of their own teaching to improve themselves. Peter Maingay, in his talk on "Observed Teaching, Integrating Principle and Practice," discussed different ways in which observations of teaching and subsequent feedback can help teachers improve their ability to generate variety in their teaching methodologies.

Other sessions dealing with different topics were equally interesting. In Alan Maley's dynamic presentation "Twenty Things to Do with Used Texts," he demonstrated different methods of exploiting texts. Kay Westerfield, in "Receptive/Productive Skills Development Through Video and Case Studies" outlined a case-study method used to teach oral and writing skills to MBA students at Oregon University. The students were given problems to discuss with the members of

¹ Chan-O-Cha, Naraporn and Suchada Nimmannit. Non-formal class-based Staff Development: A Pilot Project in Thailand. A paper presented at the 22nd IATEFL International Conference, Edinburgh, 1988.

their groups. The discussions were then videotaped and used to analyze the students' verbal and nonverbal language. Later, discussions were videotaped and compared with the earlier ones in order to monitor students' improvement. Robin Widdowson, in "Video Fluency Exercises," demonstrated various steps in using the British Telecom News to improve students' fluency, flexibility and confidence. One of these steps was recording and analysing students' comments after viewing the video.

We wish we could report all of the valuable experience we gained during these four days. For us, this 22nd IATEFL Conference was successful in that it drew more than one thousand teachers and educators together--experienced and not so experienced, young and old--to share ideas and feelings about teaching English as a Foreign Language. It provided not only a platform for those in the teaching professions to present their work but also a meeting place to create links both at the personal and the institutional level.